



U.S. DEPARTMENT *of* STATE
OFFICE OF THE SPOKESPERSON

FACT SHEET

The United States' Enduring Commitment to the Indo-Pacific: Marking Two Years Since the Release of the Administration's Indo-Pacific Strategy



FEBRUARY 9, 2024





The United States recognizes that much of our planet's future will be written in the Indo-Pacific. Our enduring commitment to this region and our collaboration with our allies and partners will help us to achieve a free and open, interconnected, prosperous, resilient, and secure region for all.

Secretary Antony J. Blinken

Jakarta, Indonesia

December 14, 2021

Introduction

The United States is an Indo-Pacific nation. As the most dynamic and fastest-growing region on earth, the Indo-Pacific is an essential driver of America's future security and prosperity. The region is home to more than half the world's population, and it accounts for 60 percent of global GDP as well as two-thirds of global economic growth. Trade between the United States and the Indo-Pacific region reached over \$2 trillion in 2022, and the United States benefits from \$956 billion in foreign direct investment from the Indo-Pacific. Our people-to-people ties bind us together – over two-thirds of international students in the United States are from the Indo-Pacific.

Since the release of the Indo-Pacific Strategy in February 2022, the United States has taken historic strides to advance our shared vision for an Indo-Pacific region that is free and open, connected, prosperous, secure, and resilient. The United States continues to demonstrate leadership and commitment to the Indo-Pacific, reinforcing the region's capacity and resilience to address the challenges and opportunities of the 21st century and showing that we can build a better future together.

Our accomplishments under the Indo-Pacific Strategy over the past two years reflect not only American leadership, but also an unprecedented level of cooperation with allies, partners, and friends across the region to tackle global challenges and protect our shared vision of the world in the face of heightened geopolitical challenges. Our work together to build collective capacity with allies, partners, and friends remains the bedrock of our approach to the region.

But as our cooperation to advance our common values and interests has grown, so too have our challenges. We have seen the PRC become more repressive at home and more assertive abroad, undermining human rights and international law, and seeking to reshape the international order. We have seen the DPRK continue to expand its unlawful nuclear weapons and ballistic missile programs. The impacts of climate change pose an existential threat to small island states. In the face of so many challenges, we remain guided by our affirmative vision under the Indo-Pacific Strategy, deepening our cooperation and collaboration to advance regional capacity, shared prosperity, and steady progress.

Our accomplishments under the Indo-Pacific Strategy over the past two years reflect not only American leadership, but also an unprecedented level of cooperation with allies, partners, and friends across the region.

The Department of State is central to these efforts, as we reinforce the architecture of diplomacy and global engagement through the Indo-Pacific Strategy. We are reinvigorating our network of partnerships and alliances, building coalitions, and deepening our engagement in multilateral institutions to meet the tests of our time.

U.S. leadership in the Indo-Pacific yields direct benefits both in the region and at home. New markets, as well as common laws, regulations, and standards, strengthen economic ties between American businesses and international markets. New investments from this vibrant region create American jobs. As we collaborate on public health crises, we become better prepared to protect ourselves from future pandemics. On these and so many other issues, the work that we do in the Indo-Pacific helps secure a safer and more prosperous world for generations to come, both across the region and at home in the United States.

I. Advancing a Free and Open Indo-Pacific

Our approach to the Indo-Pacific remains focused on advancing a free and open region where individuals live in open societies; countries make independent political choices free from coercion; and at a regional level, problems are dealt with openly, rules are reached transparently and applied fairly, and goods, ideas, and people flow freely. Key efforts led by the Department of State over the past two years include:

- **Advancing human rights and democratic institutions around the world and working with likeminded partners:** We strengthened global democratic renewal through the Summit for Democracy as well as through frank and direct dialogues on human rights and democratic resilience with regional partners. We pushed for accountability on human rights abuses in the PRC, the DPRK, and Burma. With U.S. support, the United Nations Security Council convened an open briefing on DPRK human rights in August 2023, the first in six years. We launched several inaugural dialogues in 2023, including the U.S.-ASEAN Dialogue on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in October, the Australia-U.S. Strategic Dialogue on Gender Equality in June, and U.S.-Japan-ROK Trilateral Meeting on Women's Economic Empowerment in August, and the U.S.-Japan transnational repression dialogue.
- **Supporting democracy in Burma:** In the three years since the coup in Burma, the United States has provided over \$317 million in life-saving assistance to support the people of Burma, and dedicated \$400 million to advance democracy, human rights, and justice. The United States has sanctioned 91 individuals and 50 entities to deprive the military regime of the means to perpetuate violence and to promote the democratic aspirations of Burma's people.
- **Addressing threats from foreign information manipulation and interference (FIMI):** The Department signed bilateral memoranda with the Republic of Korea and Japan to coordinate efforts to combat foreign information manipulation. We are also working to build resilience to FIMI by supporting independent news outlets across the Indo-Pacific.
- **Addressing the Rohingya Humanitarian Crisis:** The United States is the leading single contributor of humanitarian assistance in response to the Rohingya crisis, having provided nearly \$2.4 billion to support the regional response since the escalation of violence in August 2017. U.S. assistance has reached nearly 1 million Rohingya refugees residing in Bangladesh and helped support stability in the region.

- **Upholding International Maritime Law in the South China Sea:** We are supporting our Philippine allies in their efforts to grow the group of voices upholding the international law of the sea as reflected in the 1982 Law of the Sea Convention (the Convention). For example, the United States joined with allies and partners in condemning the PRC's repeated harassment of vessels exercising high seas freedom of navigation, and its continuing unwillingness to comply with a unanimous 2016 Arbitral Award, which, pursuant to the Convention, is final and binding on the PRC and the Philippines. The United States engages in intensive legal diplomacy to reinforce the international law of the sea and the international rules-based order, including meetings with foreign maritime experts and the issuance of detailed studies on maritime claims in the Department of State's "Limits in the Seas" publications.

II. Building Connections Within and Beyond the Region —

Over the past two years, we have strengthened our relationships with allies and partners to an unprecedented degree. Historic challenges require cooperation with those who share in our vision. Developing our partnerships into flexible groupings and dialogues that are fit for purpose has become an important tool for us to drive concrete results. We have strengthened our bilateral relationships, reinforced the regional architecture, and pooled our collective strength with partners and allies by:

- **Strengthening an empowered and unified ASEAN:** We have held four U.S.-ASEAN Summits over the course of the Administration, including a historic U.S.-ASEAN Special Summit in Washington, DC in May 2022. During the U.S.-ASEAN Leaders' Summit in November 2022, President Biden and ASEAN leaders elevated U.S.-ASEAN relations to a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership. The expansion in U.S.-ASEAN relations has been marked by new cabinet-level engagement in health, climate and the environment, energy, transportation, and women's empowerment, and sustained top-level participation in longstanding dialogue tracks with the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense, and the U.S. Trade Representative.
- **Deepening U.S.-Japan-ROK trilateral cooperation:** At the historic Trilateral Leaders' Summit at Camp David in August 2023, President Biden, Japanese Prime Minister Kishida, and Republic of Korea (ROK) President Yoon inaugurated a new era of trilateral partnership to broaden Indo-Pacific cooperation, deepen security, economic, and technology cooperation, combat foreign manipulation of information, and expand global health and people-to-people engagement.
- **Delivering through the Quad:** The United States continues to work with our Quad partners Australia, India, and Japan to deliver concrete benefits for the Indo-Pacific. At the May 2023 Hiroshima Summit, the Quad launched a Quad Investors Network to foster co-investment in critical technologies, announced the first Quad STEM Fellowship and 1,800 new Quad Infrastructure Fellowships. We have trained over 1,000 telecom officials and executives under the Quad Partnership for Cable Connectivity and Resilience. The Quad has also made advancements in health, critical and emerging technology, maritime security, climate, and clean energy, and more.

- **Driving new resources and expanding our presence across the Indo-Pacific:** In 2023, the United States expanded diplomatic representation in the Indo-Pacific, opening Embassies in Solomon Islands, Tonga, and Maldives. We intend to open an embassy in Vanuatu in 2024 and are actively discussing our interest in opening an embassy with the Government of Kiribati. In 2023, we appointed a U.S. Envoy to the Pacific Islands Forum to support greater coordination on Pacific priorities. The United States hosted two U.S.-Pacific Islands Summits in September 2022 and 2023 and released the first ever U.S. Pacific Partnership Strategy in 2022. In May 2023, Secretary Blinken highlighted the Department's commitment to work with Congress to secure over \$7.2 billion in new funding and programs for the Pacific Islands region.
- **Recognizing Cook Islands and Niue:** The United States recognized the Cook Islands and Niue as sovereign and independent nations and established diplomatic relations with them – a historic achievement that will deepen our bonds and advance cooperation on shared values and interests.
- **Launching Partners in the Blue Pacific (PBP):** In June 2022, Australia, Japan, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, and the United States established the Partners in the Blue Pacific to support Pacific priorities including prosperity, resilience, and security in the region. Since its launch, Canada, Germany, and the Republic of Korea have joined as partners and the EU has joined as an observer.

Historic challenges require cooperation with those who share in our vision. Developing our partnerships into flexible groupings and dialogues that are fit for purpose has become an important tool for us to drive concrete results.

- **Enhancing trilateral cooperation with Japan and the Philippines:** Through engagements among foreign ministers and national security advisers throughout 2023, we enhanced trilateral cooperation and response capabilities to advance defense and security capabilities, maintain a free and open maritime order, support humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, and promote economic security and resilience.
- **Elevating our bilateral partnerships with countries in the Indo-Pacific:** During historic leaders' level visits in 2023, we upgraded our bilateral relationships with Vietnam and Indonesia to Comprehensive Strategic Partnerships. President Biden also hosted ROK President Yoon and Australian Prime Minister Albanese for State Visits in 2023 and looks forward to hosting Prime Minister Kishida in April. With ROK, we affirmed commitments to deepen defense and security ties, expand economic cooperation, increase digital and technology collaboration, combat foreign information manipulation, and broaden development assistance, educational exchanges, and people-to-people ties. With Australia, we inaugurated a new era of U.S.-Australia strategic cooperation, adding climate and clean energy cooperation as the third pillar of our relationship alongside robust existing collaboration on defense and economic issues.

- **Supporting India's role as a regional leader:** The United States supports India's leadership in the region through multilateral and bilateral fora. 2023 included an official state visit for Prime Minister Modi to Washington in June 2023, a visit from President Biden to New Delhi for the G-20 Leaders' Summit in September, and a meeting between Secretary Blinken and Secretary Austin and their counterparts for the fifth 2+2 Ministerial in New Delhi in November. We are working closely together on defense and security, climate and clean energy, space, multilateral cooperation, and people-people ties.
- **Expanding partnerships in the Indian Ocean Region:** The United States is steadily expanding its work with Indian Ocean Region partners and organizations, like the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA), to support collective prosperity and regional stability through collaboration on key priorities like climate adaptation, sustainable and inclusive blue economies, and maritime security.
- **Connecting European and Atlantic allies with the Indo-Pacific:** To support expanded cooperation with our European and Atlantic allies in the Indo-Pacific, the United States has held regular consultations and dialogues with the United Kingdom, Canada, and the European Union, and enhanced engagement through the Partners in the Blue Pacific, NATO, and G7 and G20 fora. This cooperation has strengthened our collective capacity to support an international system that underpins our security, prosperity, and values in the face of shared global challenges from Russia's brutal invasion in Ukraine to the threats posed by the DPRK, climate change, economic security, cybersecurity, and more.
- **Investing in people-to-people connections:** In December 2023, we, alongside Arizona State University, launched the U.S.-ASEAN Center in Washington DC. We continue to strengthen leadership development through the Young Southeast Asian Leaders Initiative (YSEALI) and Young Pacific Leaders (YPL) programs which both celebrated their 10-year anniversary in 2023.

III. Driving Regional Prosperity

The United States is prioritizing investments to encourage innovation, strengthen economic competitiveness, produce good-paying jobs, strengthen supply chains, and expand economic opportunities for all in the Indo-Pacific. We are promoting private investment and economic competitiveness, and working to close the region's infrastructure gap. Over the past two years, State and USAID have dedicated approximately \$4 billion in foreign assistance to the region. Foreign direct investment from the United States in the region has nearly doubled in the last decade. These investments, in turn, bolster the foundations of American strength at home. Companies based in the APEC region have announced almost \$200B of investments in the U.S. since the start of the Administration. We have deepened our economic engagement by:

- **Successfully hosting APEC 2023:** During the U.S. Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) host year in 2023, the President hosted the APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting where Leaders endorsed the Golden Gate Declaration to advance important work on sustainability, resilience, the digital economy, and

THE UNITED STATES' ENDURING COMMITMENT TO THE INDO-PACIFIC

economic inclusion. President Biden also hosted the first informal leaders dialogue on climate to urge greater ambition and action on climate during this critical decade. Throughout the year, the United States hosted over 400 meetings, including 10 ministerials, to promote regional cooperation on transportation, trade, disaster preparedness, food security, health, energy, women and the economy, SMEs, finance, and broader economic policy.

- **Substantially concluding negotiations for Indo-Pacific Economic Framework (IPEF) Pillars:** In May 2022, President Biden launched IPEF with 13 regional partners to deepen economic cooperation and create stronger, fairer, more resilient economies. In November 2023, IPEF partners signed the Pillar II Supply Chain Agreement and substantially concluded negotiations of the IPEF Clean Economy Agreement and Fair Economy Agreement.
- **Building high-standards infrastructure:** Together with G7 Partners, we launched the Partnership for Global Infrastructure and Investment (PGI) in May 2022, and established a PGI-IPEF Accelerator to support high-standards infrastructure investment in the region with an emphasis on energy supply chains, digital connectivity, and transportation infrastructure. In Sri Lanka, the U.S. International Development Finance Corporation's \$553 million investment for the long-term development of the Port of Colombo's West Container Terminal will facilitate private sector-led growth and attract crucial foreign exchange inflows.
- **Concluding COFA-related agreements:** In 2023, the United States concluded eight agreements related to the Compacts of Free Association, signed by the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), the Republic of Palau, and the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI), to enhance economic prosperity and stability, including by providing support for essential areas such as health, education, and infrastructure.
- **Launching the U.S.-Taiwan Initiative on 21st Century Trade:** In June 2022, under the auspices of AIT and TECRO, the United States and Taiwan launched the U.S.-Taiwan Initiative on 21st-Century Trade to develop concrete ways to deepen the economic and trade relationship, advance mutual trade priorities based on shared values, and promote innovation and inclusive growth for our workers and businesses.
- **Supporting digital connectivity:** The United States committed over \$21 million to support the undersea East Micronesia Cable, alongside Australia and Japan to connect the Federated States of Micronesia, Nauru, and Kiribati. The United States also supported the Central Pacific Cable to connect several Pacific Island Countries, increasing opportunities for economic development, education, telemedicine, and banking.

Trade between the United States and the Indo-Pacific region reached over \$2 trillion in 2022, and the United States benefits from \$956 billion in foreign direct investment from the Indo-Pacific.

- **Driving cooperation on critical and emerging technologies:** To advance cooperation with partners on critical and emerging technologies, we have held dialogues with India, Singapore and ROK, and hosted the second annual Quad Technology Business and Investment Forum in San Francisco, laying the foundation for enhanced private-public collaboration across governments, industry, investors, academia, and civil society. We are also improving and securing semiconductor supply chains across the region.
- **Co-Hosting the Indo-Pacific Business Forum:** In 2023, the United States co-hosted the Indo-Pacific Business Forum with Japan, with satellite events in Bangladesh, the Philippines, and Mongolia, that launched over \$100 million in new U.S. economic initiatives.

IV. Bolstering Regional Stability

Equitable prosperity can only be achieved in a stable and secure region. The United States continues to deepen cooperation, support allies and partners' investments in their own capabilities, and enhance interoperability to promote regional security. We are enhancing the capacity of our allies, partners, and friends to address threats to regional stability, including efforts to assert unlawful maritime claims, provocations from the DPRK, and environmental and natural disasters. Working closely with the Department of Defense, we continue to bolster regional security by:

- **Supporting the Australia – United Kingdom – United States (AUKUS) Security Partnership:** In March 2023, the leaders of the United States, Australia, and United Kingdom announced the optimal pathway for Australia to acquire a conventionally armed, nuclear-powered submarine at the earliest possible date, a generational opportunity for deeper collaboration with two of our closest allies to enhance our joint capabilities, improve interoperability, and better promote regional peace and stability.
- **Strengthening security alliances:** The United States is strengthening cooperation on extended deterrence with key allies in the region. We have signed defense cooperation agreements with Indonesia and Papua New Guinea, building on decades of bilateral defense and security cooperation. We have also established a mechanism for real-time information sharing on DPRK missile threats with Japan and the ROK and integrated cooperation between Australia and Japan in trilateral exercises.
- **Expanding presence:** Through both force posture advancements and expanded multinational military operations in the Indo-Pacific, the United States is continuing to invest in regional security. This includes announcing four new Enhanced Defense Cooperation (EDCA) sites in strategic areas of the Philippines to enhance cohesion in addressing challenges in the Indo-Pacific region, including natural and humanitarian disasters, and collaborating with likeminded allies and partners on exercises such as the first U.S.-EU joint naval exercise off the coast of Oman, Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) Cobra Gold, Super Garuda Shield, and MALABAR.

THE UNITED STATES' ENDURING COMMITMENT TO THE INDO-PACIFIC

- **Supporting maritime domain awareness and maritime security:** We are building the capacity of our partners to maintain maritime security and maritime domain awareness and ensuring that the region's seas are governed and used according to international law. Alongside our Quad partners, we launched the Indo-Pacific Partnership for Maritime Domain Awareness (IPMDA) to enable our partners to better monitor their waters across the Indo-Pacific. We have signed a Shiprider Agreement with Palau to strengthen maritime domain awareness. Through the Southeast Asia Maritime Law Enforcement initiative, we have conducted trainings for more than 850 maritime law enforcement officials. Our South Asia assistance also includes \$6.5 million in capacity building on illegal fishing, including evidence handling and conduct of simulated trials to strengthen maritime security capacity and tackle maritime crimes.
- **Advancing cybersecurity cooperation and capacity-building:** With the Partners in the Blue Pacific, the United States launched an annual Pacific Cyber Capacity and Coordination Conference (P4C) in the Pacific Islands. We have also held cyber dialogues with ASEAN, Japan, the ROK, and India. We continue to train ASEAN Member States on cyberspace policy with Singapore and supported strategic planning for Thailand's National Cybersecurity Agency Through the Digital Connectivity and Cybersecurity Partnership (DCCP), we have worked closely with the governments of Timor Leste, India, and the Philippines to strengthen cyber resiliency.
- **Supporting Taiwan's self-defense capabilities:** Consistent with the United States' longstanding one China policy, we used several security assistance authorities for the first time to support Taiwan's maintenance of a sufficient self-defense capability, including Foreign Military Financing, Presidential Drawdown Authority, and International Military Education and Training.
- **Enhancing national defense capabilities:** In the last two years, we have invested \$393 million in foreign military financing and over \$34 million in International Military Education and Training (IMET) in the Indo-Pacific region that has supported the development of maritime security, maritime domain awareness, military professionalization, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief capabilities, and supported training and equipment needs. U.S. security assistance to Sri Lanka has enabled the Sri Lanka Navy to successfully complete multiple smuggling busts and several maritime exercises and enhanced its ability to police its own waters and counter illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing.
- **Countering DPRK sanctions evasion:** To track, disrupt, and deter UN sanctions evasion activities that support the DPRK regime's unlawful WMD and ballistic missile programs, the Pacific Security Maritime Exchange (PSMX) expanded in 2023, adding Italy to its membership and strengthened operational capabilities and diplomatic reach via the Enforcement Coordination Cell (ECC) in Yokosuka Japan. PSMX now includes the United States, Australia, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, New Zealand, ROK, and the United Kingdom.

- **Collaborating on civilian security issues:** Through the Quad Counterterrorism Working Group, Quad partners share best practices and expertise and coordinate counterterrorism policies. In Bangladesh, we are providing counterterrorism related assistance focusing on crisis response, bomb disposal, training for prosecutors and judges, and preventing violent extremism.

The United States continues to deepen cooperation, support allies and partners' investments in their own capabilities, and enhance interoperability to promote regional security.

V. Advancing Resilience to 21st Century

Transnational Threats

Over the past two years, the United States has worked with partners within the Indo-Pacific region to reduce vulnerability to the impacts of climate change, accelerate the clean energy transition and other critical climate mitigation actions, and support investments in global health security. We are advancing regional resilience by:

- **Supporting climate adaptation and resilience in the Pacific Islands and Maldives:** Together with Partners in the Blue Pacific, we have dedicated funding to launch an initiative on humanitarian warehousing for disaster resilience as well as an ocean and fisheries research vessel managed by the Pacific Community (SPC). The United States is also supporting the Pacific Islands Forum to stand up the Pacific Resilience Facility to support community resilience building and address loss and damage. We are also supporting marine spatial planning in partnership with the SPC and are establishing a new Resilience and Adaptation Fellowship for Rising Pacific Leaders. In South Asia, the Climate Action Champions Network engages the next generation of climate leaders by providing networks, support, and mentoring to help them pursue climate advocacy and projects that respond to the needs of their local communities.
- **Leveraging an Indo-Pacific Economic Framework Clean Economy Agreement and Catalytic Capital Fund:** Together with our IPEF partners, the United States established an annual IPEF Clean Economy Investor Forum, created a Partnership for Global Infrastructure (PGI) IPEF Investment Accelerator to scale high-standard project financing, and announced a new IPEF Catalytic Capital Fund to pool resources and expand the pipeline of bankable climate projects.
- **Advancing climate ambition, clean energy, and energy security:** To accelerate the region towards a cleaner energy future, we have launched Just Energy Transition Partnerships (JETP) with Indonesia and Vietnam, taken steps toward supporting critical energy security in the Philippines through signing a Civil-Nuclear Cooperation Agreement, and advanced the clean energy transition in South Asia by supporting

THE UNITED STATES' ENDURING COMMITMENT TO THE INDO-PACIFIC

regional energy integration through cross border electricity trade, and regional power markets. In Southeast Asia, we are advancing sustainable energy trade and clean energy integration through the Japan-U.S. Mekong Power Partnership under the Mekong-U.S. Partnership (MUSP).

- **Supporting investments in health and climate through the Quad and APEC:** Together with Quad partners, we have financed, manufactured, and distributed almost 400 million COVID-19 vaccine doses in the region, and launched a Quad Health Security Partnership in 2023. Together with our APEC partners, we convened the inaugural Sustainable Future Forum to develop public-private solutions and address environmental challenges, which will lay the groundwork to launch the APEC Coastal Resilience Framework in 2024 to help coastal communities build adaptive capacities. We are also working to develop the Seattle Framework on Gender Equality and Climate Change.
 - **Supporting water resource, land, and forest management:** Together with NASA, we provide technical and training assistance to academic, governmental, and non-governmental institutions in Bhutan and Bhutanese scholars in the United States, on water resource, land and forest management and extreme weather forecasting with the use of NASA Earth observations. In the Mekong sub-region, the Mekong-U.S. Partnership supports a technically sound, coordinated approach to managing transboundary water resources.
-